4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll

ganization which numbers about 345[24] of the city's intellectual élite, is a dark mixed-blood, the able engineer and Tupi scholar previously mentioned. The secretary of the organization is white, but during his absence on federal appointment in Rio the assistant secretary, a dark mulatto educator, discharges the secretarial duties. Of the 30 officers and committeemen of this institution, 24 are whites, 2 are *brancos da Bahia*, and 4 are mulattoes. Among the whites are several scions of the old aristocracy.

At a dinner of the Rotary Club, which numbers among its members some of the city's most prominent businessmen, 42 whites, 5 *brancos da Bahia*, and 1 very light mulatto (a visitor) were present. The guest speaker was white. Of 55 members, 47 are whites, 6 are *brancos da Bahia*, and 2 are very light mulattoes.

Of 28 citizens assuming prominent roles in a community organization designed to erect a mausoleum to Castro Alves, 15 were whites, 5 were *brancos da Bahia*, 7 were light mulattoes, 2 were dark mulattoes, and 1 was a black, the latter an able engineer and local historian. At a public meeting in honor of Castro Alves, the speaker was a white politician with a national reputation, an able man of letters, and scion of the old aristocracy. Of 200 individuals in the audience, only 18 were colored (15 mulattoes, mostly very light mixed-bloods, and 3 blacks).

At a recital given by a noted Brazilian pianist, where there were present, according to a newspaper account, "the most select of Bahia's artistic and social circles,"[25] the audience was composed of 116 whites, 14 mulattoes, predominantly light, and 2 blacks.

[24] According to the secretary of the organization.

[25] *Estado da Bahia*, January 22, 1937.

5: Azevedo--80 D, Z-5 (1951)1953 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

[SALVADOR]

The Arts

*563 53 In Bahia the populace has its own art and its artists who interpret it according to their personal conception. And one may say that from this point of view there exists a form of art that is peculiar to poor and colored persons, especially in the [565] realm of music and dance. But in the artistic activities of the higher stratum of the population, the participation of colored *563 533 people is not important, except for music. Perhaps because of the belief that attributes to mulattoes a particular inclination for [555] music, colored musicians are relatively numerous, and some of them enjoy a great deal of prestige and are admitted into the social scheme. In all the bands and in all the orchestras there is a large proportion of Blacks and mulattoes, sometimes even as [875] soloists. Some of them engage in teaching and in this way reach [556] a higher social rank when, thanks to their competence, they succeed in having pupils who belong to the wealthiest families and when they become part of the teaching corps of the most important schools of music.

*563 875 533 Of three musicians, professors of piano and composition of Bahia, of great renown in the course of these last years, two are mulattoes. The most celebrated among them, after having very brilliantly concluded a course in Germany, taught for many years in Bahia; he then moved to another State; every time that he returns to his country he is the object of demonstrations of fellow-feeling; on these occasions numerous students or instrumentalists seek him out for short refresher courses. All Bahia is proud of the talents of this artist. Another mulatto, with the help of influential persons, organized a school of music which rapidly became very famous for the quality of its teaching and for the frequent concerts that it organized. After his death, the management of the school passed to his moreno son. The teaching of violin, which is at [462] present done almost exclusively by men, includes numerous black or dark mulatto professionals; in the teaching of piano, an activity to a large extent engaged in by women, one finds morenas and *563 "whitened" of great fame. A very popular singer of mixed blood • 545 is both founder and directress of an organization which, with the 533 contribution of some thousands of adherents of the highest classes of

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*563 society, has brought to Bahia the most famous musicians of our
•545 time. The newspapers and journals report the concerts that the
533 white and colored artists give in the theaters and halls of the
[204] most important organizations of the city, and publish their /63/ pictures as well as the comments that the art critics make on the subject.

*563 In the plastic arts, colored persons have not played an im-
814 portant role, although in the past they have produced some painters
538 and sculptors of some renown whose works can be viewed in the
[532] most beautiful baroque churches of the city. These works are
[346] mentioned in the books on the art of Bahia, especially in those of a black or dark mulatto writer, Manoel Querino, son of slaves, whose studies on art, folklore, and Afro-Brazilian ethnography have made him famous. The first centenary of the birth of this intellectual, who in his biographies of numerous artists of Bahia only very rarely indicated their type, was solemnly commemorated in Bahia, as well as in Rio de Janeiro, at the same time that two other folklorists, who were white, one of whom was from Bahia, were honored.

*563 In the school of fine arts of the local university, students of
873 all types have acquired university degrees in architecture, paint-
[875] ing, drawing, and sculpture; its teaching staff at present includes at least three mulattoes, two of whom are quite dark. Some informants say, however, that one painter, because of his color, was not counted for a prize offered by the school, consisting of a journey outside the State. This incident, which happened some tens of years ago, is interpreted in different ways by our informants.

*563 In the theater, colored persons (at least those who are very
545 dark) do not have great possibilities, and one often hears this complaint expressed. The Blacks, says one young informant, never get beyond the stage of laborer or carpenter in our theaters; even for the roles of Blacks, disguised Whites are preferred. On the other hand, a morena amateur actress states that white women refuse to play the parts of Bahians and that they entrust these parts
[873] to colored girls. It is also somewhat difficult to present white and colored actors together on the same stage, even in the theatrical

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presentations of the secondary schools and universities, where color prejudice is undeniably greatly reduced. This is confirmed above all with regard to actors with pronounced Negroid features. A mulatto student relates that he often played roles (especially because of his voice) in the theater of the public secondary school where he studied; he almost always performed vocal solos, but he also often played the roles of a charlatan, a fisherman, or others of the same type. He was once designated to play, with a white companion, a love scene in which the two were to appear hand in hand. After numerous rehearsals, he was replaced by a White on the evening of the performance, on the pretext that he appeared /64/ earlier in numerous other scenes and it was necessary to give other students a chance to appear. Our informant assumes, as indeed the theatrical director admitted, that other persons considered it unsuitable for the girl to play a love scene with a mulatto.

The little theater organized and directed by a well-known intellectual of mixed blood has had great success; it is praised by the art critics and greatly admired by the population, which flocks in large numbers to attend its performances. But an incident with the judge for minors gave rise to interpretations that have been linked to color prejudice. Some time ago the theater

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gave presentations that were prolonged into the night; the judge for minors, basing himself on the law that forbids the labor of children and their presence in cinemas, circuses, theaters, and other places of nocturnal entertainment, decided to suspend the performances and instituted legal action against the director, who also directed a State department for cultural and artistic broadcasting /Fr. diffusion, diffusion, propagation, broadcasting/; the children who belong to this theater as amateur actors are recruited among families of the local intermediate classes. According to certain colored informants, these measures were due to resentment over the success gained by the initiative of a métis; and one informant heard it said in an omnibus that "the mistake of the promoter of the theater was to mix colored children and white children on the stage." These two versions are rejected by many Whites and métis who discussed this incident passionately, but it is undeniable that they have significance for the sociologist and the social psychologist.

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*563 • 545 [171] For about ten years people have been trying to organize a "Negro theater" in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In spite of the assistance of white intellectuals of great influence and endowed with the spirit of initiative, the two or three groups that have been founded have had only relative success, in spite of the indisputable artistic and intellectual merit of the Blacks and mulattoes who were at their head. About two years ago, when [658] one of these groups asked for government assistance in order to give a series of performances in Bahia, the presentation of a "Negro theater" in a city such as ours, where there is no separation of races, was considered inopportune. At least this is how some people justified the refusal against it. Two small theater groups were nevertheless founded in Bahia, "to give colored persons the possibility of becoming known," as was announced in a newspaper, but neither of these groups was able to succeed in staging a play. This lack of success may be explained in different ways. One explanation might be that amateur theater enterprises, even those directed by Whites of some prestige and aided by recreational associations able to spend /Figs. 7 and 8 appear here/ /65/ quite large sums on efforts of this kind, have been intermittent in Bahia and generally require an extreme effort by amateurs of the theatrical art; another is that the persons responsible for the two undertakings were young people of mixed blood, without experience and without credit. It should be noted, besides, that, according to one of these, the idea was not popular, even among colored persons. "Everybody doubts that this venture can be successful," he said. Some have even thought that this is "a separatist idea." It is possible that other factors come into play in this tendency to discourage similar endeavors. The theater being a means of [154] emotional expression, serving as a substitute for other ways of [796] liberating emotions, one may agree with the hypothesis of Roger Bastide, according to which the colored people of Bahia satisfy themselves by means of the exciting rites of the candomblé and the external Catholic worship with its brilliant liturgical ceremonies, its frequent and large processions, and the solemn saints' days around the most popular churches (1).

[113] 1. "Teatro de 30 dias /Theater of 30 days/," Anhembi, No. 10, Vol. IV, São Paulo, Sept. 1951.

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•545 In any case it is certain that in the realm of the theater the
554 possibilities of social ascent for persons of dark color are ex-
[555] tremely limited, as, moreover, for the people of Bahia in general, because the professions of actor and especially of actress are held in very poor esteem. The city never having had a resident theater company, its theatrical life depends not only on the passing-through of companies from other States, but even, owing to the pejorative opinion concerning the theatrical profession, one can say that at present there are no Bahian actors. The small number of those who do succeed work in other Brazilian cities and rarely perform in Bahia.

/66/ Education

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871 For numerous inhabitants of Bahia, "color prejudice is a problem of education." This opinion is formulated in different ways, but it always expresses the conviction that it is the difference of education, that is to say, of manners and of schooling, that is the greatest obstacle in the acceptance of the Black and of colored persons in the white milieus. It is not rare to hear it said among dark persons that "the evil comes from the fact that many Blacks do not have the necessary education." A Black said that his companions, members of the same association as he, maintain that the Blacks can very well occupy high positions, but he proves to them that they are not on a level that permits them to claim such positions: they lack the teaching and education. "It is not sufficient to appear spick and span, as many believe!" And the same Black adds that a "well-bred and educated Black is able to enter anywhere." And the lighter an individual is, the more easily he advances if he satisfies these requirements. A parda girl relates that the members of a professional circle where she works as a secretary treat her with more courtesy and "less distance" when they learn that she is not a mere employee, but a graduate teacher, "an educated person."